

**MIDLAND, MICHIGAN
NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN**



Version: July 27, 2009

PREPARED BY THE MIDLAND NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Change History:

7/27/2009: adopted by the City Council

City of Midland Non-Motorized Transportation Advisory Committee (NMTAC)

The City of Midland Non-Motorized Transportation Advisory Committee (NMTAC) is pleased to present this draft plan for review and comments. Comments and questions can also be forwarded Keith Baker, Director of Planning & Community Development, at (989) 837-3379 or kbaker@midland-mi.org. The NMTAC will be reviewing this draft with key individuals & groups during the first quarter of 2009 at which time it will prepare a final report for approval by the Midland City Council during the second quarter of 2009 with implementation, starting in late 2009 through a five year period.

The location of improvements proposed in this plan are specifically described in the body of the plan and supported by maps depicting the proposed bicycle and pedestrian improvements. These maps are available from the City of Midland Planning Department.

The members of the NMTAC are:

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Executive Summary

The Midland Non-Motorized Transportation Advisory Committee (NMTAC) was formed by the City Planning Department on July 17, 2008 as recommended by the 2007 City of Midland Master Plan which outlined the need for a comprehensive multi-year non-motorized transportation plan.

Creating a safe and welcoming alternative to our current automobile-centric transportation system can have profound and positive effects on the quality of life of Midland’s children and citizens and encourage more visitors to the city as shown by the success of the Pere Marquette Rail Trail. The Midland community can realize significant health, environmental, social and economic benefits by becoming more pedestrian and bicycle active to fulfill both recreational and transportation needs. To enable this change a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly infrastructure is required.

The vision of the NMTAC is that within a 5 to 10 year time horizon, most elementary and middle school children will walk or bike to school and that its’ citizens will increasingly walk or bike to and from their recreational and transportation destinations in the city. The NMTAC has identified 5 areas of focus necessary to achieve the vision:

- Education & Encouragement: Develop and implement programs that educate and encourage children and citizens of the benefits of non-motorized transport, to develop the skills required, and to take advantage of the NMT infrastructure.
- Engineering: Implement projects that transform the current infrastructure to a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly infrastructure.
- Enforcement: See that a Governance system is put in place that manages the NMT infrastructure, standards and compliance.
- Evaluation: Maintain a consistent program to measure the success, challenges and future needs of NMT efforts.

The following is a summarized list of the physical improvements the committee considered critical to the success of NMT in Midland. Prioritization by the City & NMT Committee should be based upon annual evaluation of available funding and the continuance of projects already underway.

	2009-2010	2011-2012	2013-2014	2015 +
Multi-Use Paths	Patrick to Stratford Park	Stratford to Eastman	Eastman to Dublin	City Forest
Bike Lanes	Ashman & Rodd (2009) Swede (2010)	Sugnet	Orchard Eastlawn	
Designated Bicycle Routes	All			
Sidewalks	Various locations	Various locations	Various locations	Various

The preliminary estimated costs for the proposed infrastructure is summarized as follows (see Appendix A and B for more details):

Multi-Use Paths: \$5,500,000	Bike Lanes: \$230,000
Designated Bicycle Routes: \$50,000	Sidewalks: \$25,000/year

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Introduction

Scope

When developing the non-motorized transportation (NMT) plan, the committee considered the various, and wide ranging, modes of transportation that would be addressed by the plan. These modes include, but are not limited to: pedestrians (walkers, hikers), bicyclists, skaters, and personal mobility devices for the handicapped (wheelchairs, non-motorized or electric powered and electric scooters). What was not considered as NMT transportation would include any internal combustion powered vehicle (motor vehicles, motorcycles, snow machines, golf carts, etc.), or large electric powered vehicles (golf carts, etc.).

Motivation for a NMT Friendly Community

An effective NMT program can have many positive impacts on a community: improved health for adults and children, reduced environmental impact, reduced traffic congestion, increased recreation opportunities, enhanced tourism, and a generally improved community climate. There are many elements to such a program, often described as "the 5 'E's": engineering, education, encouragement, evaluation, and enforcement.

Cities with extensive NMT usage are often among those rated "most livable" in various national surveys and studies. Communities with a strong NMT program experience an improved business climate, improved citizen health and quality of life, and higher housing values in general, and specific areas of high NMT activity have shown the greatest improvements. By enhancing Midland's NMT infrastructure and citizen participation, there is an opportunity for the city to "take a step up" in livability.

In the City of Midland, there is an extensive sidewalk system with very few gaps that inhibit walking and the use of personal mobility devices for recreation and transportation. Midland's existing and planned multi-use pathways offer, and will continue to offer, excellent facilities for in-line skaters, walkers, cyclists, and the handicapped. However, there are very limited facilities for utility and recreational bicycling on city streets. This document outlines a plan that has been developed to significantly enhance bicycling facilities for recreation and transportation in Midland. In the development of that plan, the needs of non-bicycling NMT users were thoroughly incorporated.

The bicycle component of this comprehensive plan includes separate multi-use pathways, designated bike lanes, and designated bike route bikeways. The plan includes a map of existing and proposed bicycle facilities, the rationale for each proposed facility, a proposed implementation timetable, and the estimated cost the various plan components (along with potential funding sources for each). Also

included are various "5 E" proposed actions that the NMT Advisory Committee determined were appropriate to support a community-wide NMT program.

Vision of a Balanced Motorized and Non-Motorized Society

The purpose of this plan is not to remove or diminish the use of motor vehicles in the City of Midland, but to make non-motorized transportation options more desirable, safe and convenient. NMT is not viewed as a silver bullet to solve all transportation problems facing the City of Midland, either currently or in the future, but it can be part of the solution for the challenges facing the City today and tomorrow.

With the wildly successful Pere Marquette Rail Trail, Midland is already a hub and center of activity for those who wish to use this recreation gem. With the development of the Tri-City Connectors Project, expanding the Rail Trail with additional trails extending from Midland to Bay City and Saginaw, it is envisioned that Midland will increase it's role as a recreation destination for mid-Michigan, offering recreational bicyclists, walkers and hikers a variety of restaurant, entertainment (Great Lake Loons, activities at the Tridge), and shopping opportunities to compliment their recreational activities on the Rail Trail.

It is further envisioned that the City of Midland's NMT infrastructure encourages and leads to significantly more children safely walking or biking to school and their extracurricular activities, e.g., soccer, baseball, tennis, etc. Additionally, safer routes for bicyclists to use to commute to and from their homes to work are designed to encourage people to use NMT to reduce congestion on the City's roads, reduce the use of fossil fuels (especially when gas prices are high), and improve their health. With good NMT infrastructure in place and, more importantly, an environment which encourages NMT, it is envisioned that the citizens of Midland will use NMT for their extracurricular activities, e.g., recreation, social interaction and general transportation.

City of Midland NMT Infrastructure

Definitions of the main NMT Infrastructure Types:

Throughout this plan, a variety of infrastructure types for NMT will be discussed. These include:

- i. **Walkways:** A route (minimum of 4 feet wide) separated from other roads by a barrier or space to accommodate pedestrians, skaters and handicapped transportation. Such pathways can also be used by other NMT users, e.g., bicycles if an alternative bicycle pathway is not available.
- ii. **Multi-Use Pathways:** A multi-use path is a paved route (typically 12 feet wide) separated from other roads by a barrier or open space that

is designed to accommodate a mix of non-motorized users, e.g., walkers, runners, strollers, wheel chair users, roller skaters and bicyclists.

iii. **Bike Lane:** A bike lane is a portion of a paved road (minimum 4 feet wide) that is designated by striping, signing and pavement marking for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists.

iv. **Designated Bicycle Route:** A shared lane is a travel lane shared by bicyclists and motorists and designated with appropriate signs and road markings and/or route signs.

Current NMT Infrastructure

The current NMT infrastructure comprises:

1. The Pere Marquette Rail Trail (Multi-use path, Tridge to Clare)
2. The Chippewa Trail (Multi-Use path, Tridge to Chippewa Nature Center)
3. The Southern section of the Loop Trail (Multi-Use path, Tridge to Patrick/Illinois Drive)
4. Cinema Drive Spur (Multi-Use, Soccer Fields to Midland Mall)
5. City Of Midland Bicycle Route (laid out in 2000 and partially signed circular designated bicycle route)
6. Extensive sidewalks with only minor gaps

Of these, the Pere Marquette Rail Trail, Chippewa Trail, and the Southern Section of the Loop Trail are extensively used (as are sidewalks), however, the rest are minimally used due to either their isolation (Cinema Drive spur of the Loop Trail) or lack of public knowledge of their existence (City of Midland Bicycle Route). This infrastructure is an integral part of the NMT design and supports walkers, skaters and handicapped vehicles but lacks the City centric infrastructure that will enable children and citizens to bike to their recreational and transportation destinations safely. Additionally, the most widely used Trails can be difficult for people to access safely from most of the City of Midland without driving to various access points (notably Downtown, Optimist Park, Northwood University); having to drive to get to NMT infrastructure is counter to an NMT friendly community.

Process Used to Develop the NMT Plan

1. Working "Design" sub-committee chartered by NMTAC 9/25/08
2. 2 hour weekly work sessions, 4 months (Sept – Dec)
3. A small working group of Advisory Committee members or members of the public willing to commit to the level of effort required: Irons, Petersen, Waite, Baker plus NMTAC members as available and City Engineering Dept. staff as necessary
4. Limited costs (copying, etc), funded by the City
5. Developed list of destinations by estimated usage (visits/year)
6. Developed routes to cover high priority destinations based on current traffic density data and accident statistics. Only routes with traffic density <10,000/day were considered 'safe'.
7. Review with Advisory Committee (NMTAC) including Brainstorming at monthly meetings

Non-Motorized Transportation Destinations

As a part of understanding the transportation needs of the City of Midland, NMTAC compiled a list of common destinations within the city. These destinations were first grouped according to the type of activity that occurred at the destination – either recreation or general activities. The destinations were further broken down by their level of use, based on the estimated number of visits per year. Although actual data were not collected for these sites, reasonable estimates were used based on existing data or through common assumptions.

General Transportation Destinations

Transportation use is defined when the end activity is work, school, shopping, running errands, etc...

Note: Usage Ratings are approximate

- High use (100,000 or more visits/year)
 - Mall
 - N. Saginaw/Eastman Rd plaza area
 - Circle Area including Eastlawn, South Saginaw
 - Hospital
 - Dow Chemical Michigan Division
 - Dow Chemical Headquarters
 - Dow Corning Midland Plant
 - Dow Corning Headquarters (note: outside City Limits)
 - Downtown Area including Quebecor World Inc
- Medium use (50,000 visits/year)
 - Northwood University
 - Larkin Lab area
 - Eagle Ridge area
 - James Savage Rd area
- Low use (20,000 or less visits/year)
 - Senior Center (Dublin, Saginaw)
 - Consumers Power (Washington St)
 - Midland Cogeneration Venture
 - Delta College (Wheeler/Washington)

Midland Public Schools

- High use (100,000 or more visits/year)
 - High Schools
 - Dow High
 - Midland High
- Medium use (50,000 visits/year)
 - Middle Schools
 - Jefferson
 - North East

- Central
- Low use (20, 000 or less visits/year)
 - Elementary Schools
 - Adams
 - Carpenter
 - Cook
 - Chestnut Hill
 - Eastlawn/Siebert/Sugnet/Woodcrest

Recreational Destination List

- High use (100,000 or more visits/year)
 - Pere Marquette Rail Trail
 - Loop Trail (future)
 - Midland County Fairgrounds
 - Soccer Complex
 - Community Center/Central Park
 - Dow Gardens/Center for the Arts/Library
 - Dow Diamond Baseball park
 - Midland High Stadium (including tracks)
 - Tridge Area
 - Plymouth Park
- Medium use (50,000 visits/year)
 - Civil Arena (Bay City Road)
 - Chippewa Nature Center
 - Chippewa Trail
 - Baseball Diamonds including Disc Golf (Whitman Drive)
 - Emerson Park
 - Dow High Stadium including tracks
- Low use (20, 000 or less visits/year)
 - Hang Time (W. Wackerly, Saginaw Rd)
 - Little League Baseball Diamonds (Sturgeon Rd)
 - City Forest
 - Barstow Woods
 - Tennis Center including Fitness Centers on Wackerly
 - Stratford Woods including BMX park
 - Blake Park
 - Optimists Park/Baseball Diamonds (Bay City Rd, Waldo)
 - Currie Golf
 - Herbert H. Doan History Museum area
 - “Large” Churches (throughout the city)

Plan Recommendations

To make the City of Midland friendlier to non-motorized transportation, the NMTAC developed the following list of actions that should be undertaken. These needs were prioritized into 'Required' and 'Optional'. Specific actions will need to be developed to implement these 'Required' needs. Actions already taken are noted (italicized).

Education and Encouragement

The activities in Education and Encouragement are designed to inform the community of NMT options, either existing or as they become available, within the City. Additionally, one of the aims is to encourage the use of these options and to promote Midland as a NMT – friendly city.

Required Actions – Education and Promotion

- NMT public awareness/education program on “bicycle friendly community”
- Bike safety education
- Bicyclists awareness program that lights & reflectors are a legal requirement for night use (public awareness)
- Promote/establish “Bicycle Month” in Midland
- Implement Safe Routes To School (SR2S) program (see separate section)
- Work with Midland Tomorrow/Midland Chamber of Commerce to promote Midland as a NMT-friendly city.

Optional Actions – Education and Encouragement

- Bike maintenance classes
- Promote monthly “RAT” ride (Ride Around Town)
- Promote volunteerism for NMT activities
- Electric wheelchairs/“Amigos” in the street–Safety/Caution signs/flag give away
- “Loan a bike” program

Infrastructure Development

To continue to develop Midland as a NMT – friendly City, further improvements to the NMT infrastructure are recommended. Those recommendations are summarized below; detailed actions and cost estimates are listed in Table 1. Additionally, Appendix A is a map that outlines the location of the various proposed NMT paths, routes, and lanes. The proposed routes were suggested based on their proximity to major destinations (e.g., all of Midland Public Schools buildings are along a proposed NMT route).

Required Actions - Infrastructure Development

- Rail Trail hub facility at Tridge/downtown park
 - Bike racks and secure weather protected short term storage

- Improved bathroom/locker/shower facilities
- *Suggested plans and needs were discussed with the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Riverwalk Improvement project leader*
- Continue to construct the Loop Trail system
 - The Loop Trail is envisioned to connect the multi-use path along Patrick Rd., in the east, to the Pere Marquette Rail Trail, in the west, by construction of a multi-use path that extends north through Stratford Woods Park, and along US-10. It would connect with the multi-use path along Cinema Dr. in the north, then extend further north to circle City Forest, and finally tie into the Pere Marquette Rail Trail at Dublin Rd.
 - *The east section (Illinois to Stratford Park) was submitted for 2009 planning and budgeting, but was not included in the 2009 budget*
- Install at least one North-South and one East-West bike lane corridor (marked lanes)
 - It is recommended, based on location and motorized traffic usage, that Swede Ave. (in its entirety) and Orchard Dr. (from Sugnet Rd to W. Main St.) be North-South corridors.
 - Eastlawn Dr. and W. Sugnet Rd are recommended to be the East – West corridors.
 - Additionally, the one-way pairs Ashman St. and Rodd St. be established as bike lane corridors due to their central location within the city.
- Install at least one North-South and one East-West designated bicycle route
 - The NMTAC has made a variety of recommended routes for signage to be installed (see Table 1 and Appendix A)
- Complete and integrate the existing “City Bike Route” into the new design
- Develop a safe bike/pedestrian “crossing” of Eastman Avenue north of the mall
 - This can be accomplished through signage, traffic control systems, or some other method.

Optional Actions - Infrastructure Development

- Create an “Adventure Biking” camping spot (Emerson Park/Stratford Park/Tridge)
- Fill in sidewalk “gaps” around the city
 - *Jefferson (North of US-10) to Joe Mann Boulevard (east side). Submitted for 2009 planning.*
 - *Bay City Road (south side in vicinity of Waldo). Submitted for 2009 planning.*
- Changes to the Dial-a-Ride system
 - Install bike racks on the buses

Table 1: Midland NMT Route Design Recommendations

Definitions:

- Trail: dedicated multi-use separated path facility with two-way traffic for bicycles, pedestrians, in-line skaters. Marked and possibly signaled street crossings.
- Bike Lane: on-street pavement striping with bike lane markings, proper intersection treatments
- Designated Bicycle Route: low traffic streets marked where route turns with signs and pavement markings

Cost Estimates:

Costs were estimated based on the unit rates provided by the City of Midland Engineering Department.

- Multi-Use Pathways: \$290,000/mile of 10ft paved path. MDOT also provided estimates for the loop trail segments.
- Bike Lane: \$20,000/mile to incorporate bike lanes on an existing 36ft wide pavement (includes paint striping and sign on both sides of the pavement)
- Designated Bicycle Route: \$200 per installation (includes a sign and pavement marking)
- Walkways: \$116,000/linear mile for 5ft wide concrete sidewalk

Route (estimated cost)	Destinations served	Route rationale	Estimated # of signs
South side Loop Trail (completed)	Tridge area, downtown businesses, Dow Diamond baseball stadium, Dow, Dow Credit Union, Washington and South Saginaw Rd. business areas, Dow Center, Eagle Ridge, James Savage Rd. businesses, Civic Arena, Waldo Rd. connector to Saginaw Trail, Dow Corning plant via Saginaw Rd. or Waldo/Salzburg, E. Patrick connector to Bay City Trail, Dow Corning HQ via E. Patrick to Flajole or Carter Road.	Recreational and utility separated trail for walkers, in-line skaters, families, cyclists. Completes loop around the city using Rail Trail and planned North Side Loop Trail. Connects to Bayliss designated bike route and Swede Rd. bike lane.	Signs needed at connector points and cross roads
North side Loop Trail Patrick/Stratford 500K\$ Stratford/Eastman 2000K\$ Eastman/Dublin \$1200K	Stratford Park, Blake Park, Wackerly St. businesses, Tennis Center, Calvary Baptist, Senior Center (Dublin/Saginaw)	Recreational and utility separated trail for walkers, in-line skaters, families, cyclists. Completes loop around the city using Rail Trail and South Side Loop Trail which already exist. Connects to designated bike routes and bike lanes at numerous points. Sited on south side of US10 for easy access and use.	Signs needed at connector points and cross roads
Mall / City Forest	Soccer complex, Evangelical Free Church,	Extends existing separated trail from	6

Trail/Route \$1800K	Larkin Lab. Area, Midland Cinemas, Midland Mall, north Eastman and mall area businesses, City Forest, Fairgrounds, Little League Baseball Diamonds	Jefferson and combines with low traffic streets (Elisenal & Commerce Dr.) and proposed separated trail along Eastman, Monroe, and Sturgeon Roads reconnecting with north side loop trail.	
Eastlawn bike Lane \$30K	Dow Center, Parkdale school, Eastlawn school, Midland High Stadium, South Saginaw Rd. businesses, Community Center	Bike lane to deal with traffic levels on Eastlawn. Connects east side route, Concord / Dartmouth / Bayliss route, and Haley / Nelson / Grove downtown route. Part of Adventure Cycling Lake Erie Connector route.	Bike lane standard per mile
Swede Ave. bike Lane \$80K	Plymouth Park, Dow Center, Parkdale school, Midland High Stadium, Blessed Sacrament, Holy Family Episcopal, Christian Celebration Center	Commuter route connecting south side of loop trail with north side of loop trail. Major commuter route for east side. Bike lane communicates "share the Rd." to motorists.	Bike lane standard per mile
Sugnet Rd. bike Lane \$80K	Sugnet school, Plymouth school, Northeast Middle School, First Baptist, LDS Church, Holy Scripture Lutheran, Trinity Lutheran, Hospital, Northwood University	Major east-west connector. Bike lane communicates "share the Rd." to motorists. Crosses Washington, Jefferson, Saginaw Rd. & Eastman with traffic lights.	Bike lane standard per mile
Orchard Rd. bike Lane \$20K	Hospital, Rail Trail, Emerson Park, Currie Golf	West side connection to Sugnet and west side route.	Bike lane standard per mile
Ashman / Rodd bike lanes \$20K	Tridge area, downtown business district, Community Center, City and County offices, County Court House, Central Middle School, St. Brigid, Memorial Presbyterian, First United Methodist, St. John Lutheran.	Bike lane on Ashman from Nelson St. to downtown and on Rodd from downtown to Nelson St. Connects Nelson /Helen / St. Andrews designated bike route with downtown.	Bike lane standard per mile
Lambros designated bike route \$1.6K	Eagle Ridge Church of God, Eagle Ridge Industrial & Research Park	Eastern extension of Sugnet bike lane connecting Swede Ave. bike lane and east side route	12
East side (north to south) designated bike route \$4.8K	Chestnut Hill school, United Church of Christ, Ashman School	North/south commuter route between Swede and Waldo.	24
North side (east to west) designated bike route \$3.6K	Jefferson Middle School, Adams School, Siebert School, Community Church of the Nazarene, Chapel Lane Presbyterian, Christian Celebration Center	Low traffic connector crossing Jefferson & Eastman w/traffic lights. Connects all north/south routes & bike lanes.	30
Central (North to South) designated bike route	Adams School, Delta College, Washington Woods, Midland Stadium, South Saginaw	North/south commuter route between Washington & Jefferson. Connects all	32

Concord / Dartmouth / Bayliss designated bike route \$3.6K	Rd. businesses, post office, Dow, Dow Chemical Credit Union, Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran	east/west routes, bike lanes, and south side loop trail.	
Siebert / Russell / Castle Dr. designated bike route \$1.6K	Wackerly businesses, Siebert School, Jefferson Middle School	North/south commuter route between Jefferson and Eastman. Makes use of short sidewalk segment connecting Crescent & Wheeler.	14
West side (north to south) designated bike route \$2.8K	Hospital, west Saginaw Rd. businesses, fairgrounds, Woodcrest school, Open Door Baptist	Connects north side loop trail and future City Forest trail via low traffic streets to Sugnet bike lane. West side commuter route feeding Dow and downtown via Orchard and Rail Trail.	22
Helen / St. Andrews designated bike route \$1.2K	MCFTA, Library, Dow Gardens, Emerson Park, Rail Trail	Connector for downtown loop and extension from Eastlawn Bike Lane (via Nelson)	10
Haley / Nelson / Grove downtown designated bike route \$6.0K	Tridge area, downtown business district, Community Center, City and County offices, County Court House, Central Middle School, Carpenter School, baseball stadium, St. Brigid, Memorial Presbyterian, First United Methodist.	Loop connecting Eastlawn bike lane, Helen/St. Andrews designated bike route, Tridge area and Rail trail Source / destination for Ashman / Rodd bike lanes. Part of Adventure Cycling Lake Erie Connector route.	40
Main St. / Perrine Rd. designated bike route \$2.8K	Northwood University, hospital, Dow High School, Cook School, Holy Scripture Lutheran.	Connecting Rail Trail and north side loop.	14

Funding for Infrastructure

In addition to City of Midland General Funds, it is anticipated that other sources of funding for the proposed NMT infrastructure improvements can be found. These may include:

- Walkways & Designated Bicycle Route: funding could be adequately covered by the City's Act 51 (1% to NMT) portion of annual road maintenance budget.
- Bike Lanes: a blend of local Act 51 monies and foundation grants.
- Multi-Use Paths: funding could come from MDOT grants and 20% matching contributions from local foundation support.
- Michigan Fitness Foundation: This organization provides monies to promote NMT use of children to go to/from school. By working with Midland Public Schools, it may be possible to obtain grant money for signage and NMT promotion programs. (See: <http://www.saferoutesmichigan.org/> for more information)

Governance

It is a goal of the NMTAC to see these recommendations implemented. To that end, the following actions are suggested to ensure that NMT becomes an integral part of the City and its future planning and growth.

Required Actions - Governance

- Certification as "Bike Friendly Community" through League of American Bicyclists
 - *Included in Next Steps. Funding to be secured from Community Foundations. Approx cost \$2000 for LAB workshop.*
- Formalize NMTAC by resolution/ordinance and make it a permanent board associated with the appropriate City department
- Bike parking (racks) in site plans/zoning code
 - *Submitted text amendment to Bike Rack Zoning ordinance*
- Implement "Complete Streets" (to include a requirement that NMT infrastructure shall be explicitly considered in new construction and reconstruction roadway projects)
- Standardize/establish appropriate path width for multi-use paths
- Emphasis on enforcement (police department) of bike laws

Optional Actions - Governance

- Develop a "professional" NMT plan
- Implement a winter sidewalk clearing (snow removal) ordinance

Safe Routes To School (SR2S)

It is felt that the children in the community will be major users of non-motorized transportation, as well as encouraging their parents to use NMT. The NMTAC engaged the Midland Public School (MPS) system to understand what their needs and plans were for the future. During this discussion, it was learned of a program in Michigan called Safe Routes to School (SR2S). This program is run by the Michigan Fitness Foundation (MFF) (<http://www.saferoutesmichigan.org/>) to promote physical activity in children by walking/biking to and from school.

Members of NMTAC contacted the PTO's at the elementary schools to determine their interest in the SR2S program. It was found that the individual schools, while supportive of the program, did not see how it could be implemented at the individual schools. However, in discussions with MPS administrators, it was felt that SR2S might be implemented on a system-wide scale.

It is recommended that the City of Midland and MPS coordinate their efforts to promote NMT within the city and the schools. By coordinating their efforts, it is felt that state, federal and MFF money may be accessible to offset the cost of NMT infrastructure and promotion programs.